Reviews

HOSPITAL DESIGN

Studies in the Functions and Design of Hospitals. The Report of an Investigation sponsored by the Nuffield Provincial Hospitals Trust and the University of Bristol. (Pp. 192+xx; illustrated. 63s.) London, New York, Toronto: Oxford University Press. 1955.

The intrinsic merit of this report, its system of presentation, and its printing and illustrations are all excellent. Moreover, it has been published at an opportune time in view of the probable resumption of hospital building and extensions after such a long lapse of time. It deals with the following: (1) studies of wards, consultative and treatment facilities for out-patients, and operating theatres; (2) studies in physical environment, including lighting, heating, and ventilation, colour, control of noise, and fire prevention; (3) a study of the demand for hospital services in two hospital groups: one serving a population of about 311,000, and the other a population of about 484,000. This last item is of fundamental importance and indicates two main lessons. The first is that the over-all number of acute general hospital beds required may be fewer than was thought formerly—perhaps only about two beds instead of four or more per 1,000 population. The second is that ward units should be designed for flexibility with the beds grouped together in small more or less self-contained units, so that when necessary they can be reallocated between the sexes, between different age groups, and between different specialties.

The treatment of physical environment in relation to the planning of individual hospitals provides much stimulating matter for hospital architects, doctors, nurses, and lay administrators. For example, the statement that a ward three beds deep can be adequately lit from a window on one side only, if proved correct and accepted, might lead to more economical planning of new hospitals in Britain.

The sections in this volume on wards and operating theatres are of much interest, because, in addition to a most able presentation of the theory of planning such units, they describe in detail an experimental ward unit at Larkfield Hospital, Gourock—now completed and in use—and the experimental ward unit, twin theatres, and central sterile supply department now under construction at Musgrave Park Hospital, Belfast. It is to be hoped that many hospital authorities will make use of the lessons to be drawn from these experimental units as well as from the descriptions of first principles in the report. Thereby the planning of hospitals should become more efficient and more economical in both capital and running costs.

W. G. PATTERSON.

THE PSYCHOSOMATIC APPROACH

A Psychosomatic Approach to Medicine. By Desmond O'Neill, M.D. (Pp. 197+vii. 25s.) London: Pitman Medical Publishing Co. Ltd. 1955.

This little book is concerned with the effects of psychological stress upon the whole patient. It is simply and clearly written in an engaging manner which may well make the subject seem more straightforward than is in fact the case. Indeed, Dr. O'Neill has gone so far in his desire to present psychiatry as a common-sense specialty that he assumes a one-to-one relationship between cause and effect, which, if it were the case, would put psychiatrists out of business. He takes the estimable view, shared with Hippocrates, that the care of the whole patient is the responsibility of the physician, and throughout his presentation makes it evident that he wishes that all family doctors would accept this. Many psychiatrists will take issue with him and with other exponents of the "stress syndrome," particularly upon his seeming neglect of the role of inborn immutable personality traits in the formation of reaction patterns, and also upon his seeming disregard of the less overt environmental causes of neurosis. It all seems so easy, particularly in the many excellent vignettes of cases, which suggest progress to recovery that it would be a delight to achieve. Nevertheless it will mainly be psychiatrists who will criticize the book, and other clinicians—whether family doctors or specialists—will get a refreshing stimulus from it, though they may feel the same nostalgic regret as an amateur gardener looking at the illustrations in a seed catalogue.

Dr. O'Neill, having dealt in a general way with the relationship of the doctor to the patient, gives a statement of the occurrence of neurosis due to stress seen in general practice, and then he deals at length with the effects of psychological stress on bodily function. This he does in an admirable way with clear reference to reliable contemporary work, and throughout an atmosphere of cheerful ease pervades. The book can be recommended as general reading for senior medical students and any clinical practitioner.

DENIS WILLIAMS.

ORTHOPAEDICS FOR STUDENTS

Essentials of Orthopaedics. By Philip Wiles, M.S., F.R.C.S., F.A.C.S. 2nd edition. (Pp. 538+xv; illustrated. 55s.) London: J. and A. Churchill Ltd. 1955.

This textbook on a specialized subject is for undergraduates and practitioners. The author is to be congratulated on this second edition, particularly as he appreciates the extent of orthopaedic progress but has not given way to the temptation of enlarging the volume so that it might cease to fulfil its purpose. The first edition has been a popular book in most medical schools, and the slight changes are consistent with the requirements of the reader. The subjects of spinal curvature, pain in the back, and backache are dealt with simply and with a clarity which will help the student. Examination of limbs and spine is well described. Congenital dislocation of the hip is discussed rather fully, whereas acute suppurative arthritis in infants is described briefly in comparison with the condition in adults, who are less often affected. The injuries and diseases of foot and hand are important to a practitioner, and in this volume he will find precise descriptions with well-chosen illustrations. Throughout the book the clinical features are easy to understand, and nowhere is there too great detail. After the regional conditions have been studied the reader will find general diseases, infections, rarer conditions of bones and joints, and a chapter on tumours of bone. The arrangement of the last mentioned is well planned; each tumour is given an ample description and the radiographs are most suitable. Throughout the volume the indications as to treatment are clearly presented. The value of antibiotics is emphasized, and the author advises the use of penicillin in the first place. His views on the present-day treatment of tuberculosis and of spastic paralysis attract attention.

The student cannot fail to be satisfied with Mr. Wiles's book. It provides him with much useful—in fact essential—knowledge, which he will find well presented, and nearly every illustration will help him. Perhaps the word "idiopathic" can be dispensed with if a third edition is required.

ST. J. D. BUXTON.

HYPOTHALAMIC SYNDROME

Le Syndrome Hypothalamique. By Jean Weill and Mme. J. Bernfeld. Preface by Professeur Rémy Collin. (Pp. 260; 24 figures. 1,600 frs.) Paris: Masson et Cie. 1954.

This book falls into two main sections. After a short account of the anatomy and histology of the hypothalamus, the physiology of the hypothalamic regulation of all the visceral (and also many psychic) functions of the body is reviewed. Thereafter follows a description of the pathological syndromes that result from alteration of these functions—syndromes that are presumed to be due to

disturbances of the hypothalamus. No original clinical work is described, and the review appears to aim at universality rather than critical appraisal.

Even as a comprehensive review it is quite inadequate. The literature considered shows, not unnaturally, a heavy bias towards papers in French; a considerable amount of work published in German and English is quoted, but the capricious way in which minor work is referred to while major contributions are omitted suggests that this literature has not been consulted in the original. There is virtually no reference to work published since 1950. The non-critical nature of the review may be instanced by the section on sleep. The authors state that Hess caused sleep in cats by stimulation of the hypothalamus. Actually Hess's sleep-producing zone is in the thalamus: when he stimulated the posterior hypothalamus he caused arousal, and in some cases stimulation of the anterior hypothalamus caused a condition of atonia. On the other hand, Ranson and his colleagues are reported to have produced sleep by destroying the hypothalamus, when in fact they called it "somnolence" because it differed in many ways from natural sleep. Hess brought about a similar effect and called it "adynamia"; but this is not reported, and the Ranson experiments are said to refute those of Hess. This type of superficial, and hence inaccurate, discussion is found in many other sections. The relation of the hypothalamus to the cerebral cortex is especially misleading, though a large variety of psychiatric disorders are discussed as though they were due to hypothalamic dysfunction. The value of the clinical part of the book is lost as a result of this weakness in discussing the experimental work.

The fact that most sections are summarized in complex diagrams of the effect and counter-effect of all the postulated "centres" and effector organs lends a dangerously seductive air of finality to their calculations. One feels that the authors should reread the strictures of their compatriot Pierre Marie on the *période géométrique* in neurology. The only value one can see in this book is as a source of reference to some little-known French clinical literature of the 1930's and 40's. Many better reviews of the physiology of the hypothalamus are available in English.

DONALD MCDONALD.

A NEW THEORY OF CANCER

The Liver and Cancer: A New Cancer Theory. By Kasper Blond, M.D., F.I.C.S. Foreword by E. Stanley Lee, M.S., F.R.C.S. (Pp. 220+xii. 27s. 6d.) Bristol: John Wright and Sons, Ltd. 1955.

The publication of a book advancing a new theory of cancer will attract attention among the medical profession generally and those engaged in cancer research in particular. It is, however, doubtful if many will be impressed by Blond's new theory. He believes that the basis of all malignant disease is a mutation of somatic tissues caused by chronic liver damage. This damage, the termination of which may be cirrhosis, varies in degree, and up to a certain stage is a reversible process. It results in failure to detoxicate metabolic products derived from the alimentary canal, so that "nutritional toxins" gain access to the circulation. These "nutritional toxins" are responsible for the mutations which lead to the malignant growth.

Nearly all Blond's statistical data are derived from Peller's *Cancer in Man*. By excluding skin cancers on the ground that they can nearly all be cured, and by including uterine cancers because he believes that the uterus may be considered to act as a metabolic organ during pregnancy, he deduces that 98% of all cancers in adults are of alimentary origin. He explains the locations of cancer by his belief that all these degrees of liver damage are accompanied by portal hypertension with inversion of the blood flow. The pressure, however, is not equally distributed throughout the portal tree, but may affect only certain tributaries. Thus, if the gastric flow is affected the stomach becomes congested and "nutritional toxins" become concentrated in this area, resulting in malignancy. This theory is expanded to cover the growth of metastases and the differences in distribution of primary malignancies between children and adults. Blond also claims that this theory explains a variety of other conditions—for example, gastritis, peptic ulcer, ulcerative colitis, and diabetes—all of which he considers as precancerous.

Blond's theory is hypothetical speculation entirely lacking scientific proof, without which it can only be detrimental to the solution of the cancer problem.

J. H. O. EARLE.

COSMETICS

The Principles and Practice of Modern Cosmetics. Volume I —Modern Cosmeticology. By Ralph G. Harry, F.R.I.C. Foreword by P. B. Mumford, M.D., F.R.C.P. 4th edition. (Pp. 786+xxiv; illustrated. 65s.) London: Leonard Hill (Books) Ltd. 1955.

The day has long passed when medical men can afford to neglect the information available in the cosmetic field, for there are few industries which have been more successful throughout the world, and as a result the manufacturers of cosmetics have been able to employ some of the most capable scientists available in commercial chemistry. Consequently these manufacturers were well ahead of us in the use of emulgents. As Dr. P. B. Mumford says in his introduction to this book, "from the data and photographs in this publication, physicians will learn how vehicles can be expected to infiltrate the extremely complicated terrain of the human skin, and the dermatologist can learn to treat disabilities in a manner welcome to the patient because it does not entail grease, stain, irritant or externally obvious drawbacks."

Few of us will want to read this book from cover to cover, but as a work of reference concerning all matters from the formulae and constituents that may be used in the manufacture of toothpaste to the semi-cosmetic preparations that may be used for babies, and from the latest practice and theories concerning permanent waving to the formulae that may be used for making "cosmetic stockings"—that is, "make-up" for legs—it is invaluable. Those who are interested in the advance of applied science to industry will find much of interest. For example, for medical purposes we use emulsions of oils in water or water in oils formed by the action of emulsifying agents. Mr. Harry, in an interesting chapter, discusses the modern practice of forming relatively stable emulsions without the use of these agents by dispersion with acoustic waves. He also discusses the value of adding humectants to emulsions, and such matters as aerosols, the molecular structure of hair, the transmission spectra of certain sun-screens, the difference between the practical and the precise meaning of *p*H, and many matters in physical chemistry which not only are of interest but may have a bearing on some aspects of our work.

Most dermatologists and allergists know Mr. Harry's publications well; this new edition can be recommended to pharmacologists, pharmaceutical chemists, and all who are interested in the mode of action of drugs and the compilation of formularies. Finally, it is of interest to general practitioners who wish to know the correct answers to questions such as, "Would a cold perm hurt my hair, doctor?" or, "What do you think of chlorophyll?"

R. M. B. MACKENNA.

Newcastle Regional Hospital Board has recently produced a booklet on hospital decoration, *The Use of Colour in Hospitals*, prepared by the regional architect, P. H. Knighton, and illustrated by the architectural department. The main aim of the writer is to encourage attractive colour schemes in hospitals both for their therapeutic value to patients and for the benefit of the staffs. He relates the use of colour to the size and shape of rooms and to the age of the building, its outlook and general surroundings. A specimen shade card is included at the end. The illustrations are mainly of a humorous cartoon type to emphasize a point, but they do include several architectural suggestions. The result is a bright and interesting series of notes on the principles of hospital decoration. The booklet is obtainable from the offices of the Board, Walker Gate Hospital, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 6, price 7s. 6d.